UNITED NATIONS **ST**

Secretariat

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INFORMATION CIRCULAR*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services

Subject: ELECTRONIC MAIL

Use of electronic mail

1. The use of electronic mail (e-mail) is strictly limited to conducting official business for the United Nations. It is therefore subject to all rules and regulations governing the conduct of official business through conventional methods. Thus, e-mail should not be used for any communications of a personal nature or for private business.

2. E-mail is largely an informal mode of communication. It is the responsibility of the sending and receiving offices to determine the extent to which e-mail communications can be accepted as formal correspondence. This is also true when communicating with outside parties connected to the Organization's e-mail system via the Internet, or through other means.

3. It is expected that all authors of e-mail messages understand the true purpose of e-mail usage and do not send any messages that could be interpreted as accusative, discriminatory and/or derogatory to any party.

4. In order to avoid serious problems in the flow and delivery of e-mail messages, staff members are requested not to use e-mail to send personal messages, such as chain letters or other type of messages unrelated to official business. When a staff member receives one of those messages, he or she is requested not to forward it.

5. Any file created on a personal computer can be transmitted as an attachment to an e-mail message. Owing to system constraints, the total size of the

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attached file should not exceed two megabytes (2,000,000 bytes). In order to provide for good system performance, messages with attachments larger than two megabytes should not be transmitted via e-mail.

Retention period

6. Reference is made to ST/IC/1997/11 of 4 February 1997, entitled "Electronic mail - directory maintenance and automatic message deletion", which describes the current procedures used in the e-mail system. Users should be aware that the retention policies for administrative and other inter-office correspondence remain valid and therefore e-mail messages must be saved accordingly, if necessary.

Availability

7. E-mail access will be provided to all regular and temporary staff members working at United Nations Headquarters, provided that they have access to personal computers and proper accounts to access the departmental local area network (LAN) servers. It can also be provided to affiliated contractors under the respective contractual arrangements governing their work for the Organization.

System operations

8. The e-mail system is supported at United Nations Headquarters only during regular working hours. Any problems related to e-mail may be reported to the help desk of the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD), at extension 3-3157. Should support or availability of the e-mail system be required outside regular working hours for a special event such as a conference, the respective department or office should submit a request in writing to the Director of ITSD.

Internet connectivity

9. Internet has become one of the leading vehicles for e-mail connectivity because of the low cost and wide availability of its access. Internet e-mail connectivity will be readily available for all e-mail users. Once an e-mail account is established for a staff member, an Internet address will be assigned automatically. However, interactive access to the Internet, such as World Wide Web access, must be requested by the respective department or office in writing to the Director of ITSD.

10. Because of the nature of the Internet, staff members should know that the stability of Internet connections and security is not guaranteed. If security-sensitive messages are to be exchanged over the Internet, both parties, sender and recipient, should understand these limitations.

Broadcasting a message to all e-mail users

11. Broadcasting an e-mail message to all e-mail users at United Nations Headquarters is not routinely supported. If there is such a need, the respective department or office should submit a written request, through its

Executive/Administrative Officer, to the Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management.

12. The present information circular should be read in conjunction with ST/AI/386 of 23 August 1993, entitled "Electronic mail policies and standards", and with the above-mentioned ST/IC/1997/11.